

Summer After

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Summary: RvB Slash. ChurchGrif. It's the summer after the war, and lost love brings tension to Church's way of life.

OneShot

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Author's Note: Written as a request in exchange for a picture done by the lovely Somniac. Thank you and enjoy.

The summer after the war was a sticky one. Hot, sticky, and humid. One where the sun burned at 101.5° F on the city below. Church figured it was worse than in the box canyon, where he at least had A/C in his room. The shit-hole he called a home didn't even have that, and he found the windows wide open and the fans blowing every morning and they were on all day until he went to bed. His apartment was located over the local deli; the smells of sandwich meats and fresh bread wafting through the windows. It seemed to be the only thing enjoyable in the entire godforsaken building. His neighbors were loud, and his room mate was even worse.

"I'm heading out again." Speak of the devil. Lavernius Tucker waltzed into the room Church found refuge in, his black locks tied up with a teal bandana.

"Fuck off." Tucker shrugged, grumbling about something under his breath and leaving Church to his peace. The front door opened and snapped shut as the ex-soldier of Blood Gulch left the apartment. How the hell he ended up with Tucker as a room mate, he didn't know. But at least he paid the rent on time, and that was good enough for him. He also liked the fact that the twit was never home, as he always seemed to pay a visit to the lovely ladies of Broadway. Church snorted in laughter. Lovely. That was a stretch.

His mind started to wander back to events that took place in the Gulch, some good and some bad, and didn't hear the distant ringing of his telephone in the living room. It rang three times, before the

familiar _click_ of the answering machine picking up.

'You've reached the residence of Tucker and Church, please leave a message after the annoying noise some may recognize as a beep.'

"Leonard? Hey, you there? It's Grif. You never leave the house; I know you're there...pick up, man. Leonard? I need to talk to you...come on, just pick up the damn phone..."

The voice drifted through the house, finally reaching Church's ears. The faint voice snapped him out of his thoughts, and the answering machine clicked off as the message finished. He sighed heavily, finding the energy to move from his seat and into the main room. Just as he reached the phone, it rang again. Once. Twice. Thrice. _Click._

'You've reached the residence of Tucker and Church, please leave a message after the annoying noise some may recognize as a beep.'

"Leonard. It's Allison. We need to-" Church slammed his fist down on the machine, the hot plastic snapping under the pressure. He growled dangerously, lifting his fist to examine the damage. Blood was slowly seeping from the paper cut sized scrapes along the fist, the old answering machine smashed to bits. He quickly smeared the blood across the thin white shirt he wore, turning on his heel and storming out the door. He figured it was best to get a new one before Tucker got home. God only knows how much bitching that man would do if he found out what happened.

Grif frowned, gently placing the phone back in the receiver. It was unlike Church to ignore his calls. He never did. He sunk further into his chair, the soft cushion molding to his body. He glanced out the window, thankful for the A/C his flat had when he saw the blindingly hot sun searing the passersby on the street.

'Maybe,' He thought to himself, _'It was all just a game to him.'_ The door opened, shattering the silence that surrounded him. He glanced up, locking gazes with the brunette that walked in. His younger brother, Kira.

"Oh! Hey...I thought you were going out." Kira questioned Grif. He shrugged his shoulders, "Change of plans."

"...Hey, Kira...you doing anything tonight?" He turned his attention from the window and onto his brother. Kira averted his gaze, scratching the back of his head nervously.

"Oh...I had...a date. Sorry, bro." Grif gave him a half smile, nodding understandingly.

"That's fine. With who?" Kira returned the smile, sitting in the chair across from Grif and leaning forward.

"Remember Paige? From school?" Grif's mouth fell open in shock as he nodded his head. He closed his mouth after a moment, giving his bro a pat on the back.

"Good job. Now go get ready. I think I'll go out and have a bite to

eat while you're out." Kira nodded, watching his bro leave the apartment they shared. He sighed, his smile fading into a sad frown.

"Poor guy...hasn't been the same since he returned from the Gulch. I wonder what's eating him." And with a shrug, Kira went about his business, pushing the thoughts of his older brother from his mind.

Church wondered what the hell he was thinking, heading out into this weather. He may not have had A/C in apartment, but at least it was better than the white hot sun that bounded off the cement sidewalk and into his face. He changed course slightly, heading into the shadows cast down by the overhang of the café. He peered through the window into the small shop filled with cute little tables and chairs. Couples fawned over each other, their coffee lay forgotten on the white clothed table before them, sharing kisses and whispered secrets.

Church frowned, moving his gaze to the crowd that filed past the cooled coffee shop. Women laden down with armfuls of designer bags, fingernails manicured with sugar pink polish, and toe nails to match. Children screaming up and down the sidewalk, tossing elastic balls of water at each other, droplets splashing around them as the plastic snapped. Men in business suits with phones to their ears as they rambled about building plans and the meeting next week on Tuesday, four o' clock sharp. New York City. Not a place Church was fond of, but he had to admit...it had its moments.

He took one step forward, heading back into the bustling crowds of the streets, when something caught his eye. A quick flash from across the street as sunlight bounced off of metal. He squinted into the brilliant light, catching the movements of someone he hadn't seen in months.

Dexter Grif stepped down the porch of his apartment building, hands in his pockets and eyes shielded with a pair of designer shades. He cocked an eyebrow, watching as Grif moved down the street, wearing jeans, an orange tank top and sandals due to the summer weather. The former red paused in his actions, his eyes snapping up as though he felt the watchful gaze. He scanned the crowds in front of him, behind him...and then across the street. He tilted his head, peering at Church over the rim of his glasses. Their eyes locked, and Church found himself pushing his way across the street.

"I...I thought you were still at the Gulch." Was the first thing to pass Church's parched lips as he approached the red. Grif gave him a crooked smile, taking away the shades from his eyes.

"I'm off. I'm officially out of the army," Grif looked away, his demeanor suddenly changing, "I...thought you were ignoring me. I called, and you didn't pick up."

Church thought back to his time spent in his apartment, the call from Tex...but what got his attention in the first place? Then it clicked, like the answering machine that lay in pieces upon the living room side table. It was Grif that called before Tex even dialed up his number.

"I would never ignore you...I just didn't hear the phone. Next thing

I knew, the answering machine was broken. Must've been the summer heat. I didn't get your message..." Grif gave him a condescending look, knowing that it wasn't 'summer heat' that got to the answering machine, but Church's fist instead.

"Oh, fuck this formality shit." Grif raised an eyebrow in question, but before he could respond, Church had captured his lips in a fiery kiss. Grif pulled back from the kiss, his eyes wide. Church looked up at the slightly taller man, a sparkle gleaming in his eyes. One that Grif hadn't seen in a long while.

"Damn, I've missed you." Church chuckled, finally feeling at ease for once. Grif grinned, "My brother just left for a date...we can...'discuss' things further there."

"Good idea," Church grabbed his former, or shall we say renewed, lover and pulled him towards the building he saw him leaving.

"By the way...what's with the Versace shades, man...that is so..._gay_." Church called over his shoulder as he pulled Grif inside the building.

"Umm, Leonard. I am gay."

End
file.